Media coverage during terrorist attacks

1103. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state the code of conduct that would be followed by media in the event of incidents like 26/11 to prevent the unfortunate occurrence of terrorists using media reports to plan their attacks and strategy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has constituted a Media Consultative Committee for media facilitation under the chairmanship of Secretary, I and B. The committee includes media organisations, inclusive of both print and electronic media and also representatives of civil society.

The terms of reference of the Committee are as under:—

(i) To serve as a forum of regular consultations between Government and various professional media bodies.

(ii) To provide a platform for exchange of views on concerns of civil society.

(iii) To discuss concerns of media organisations on various regulatory policy/procedural matters.

(iv) The Committee will meet at least twice a year or as and when necessary.

As far as print media is concerned, the Press Council of India (PCI), a statutory autonomous body has laid down Norms for Journalistic Conduct. The cases of violations of these norms are looked into by the Press Council and action is taken against the publication/journalist by the Council in terms of provisions of the PCI Act, 1978.

For electronic media, TV channels are required to ensure compliance of Programme and Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and Rules framed thereunder. Further, with a view to provide greater specificity to the existing provisions, a Committee was constituted by the Government for reviewing the above codes. The Committee has submitted its report (Self Regulation Guidelines for Broadcasting Sector) to the Government on 05.03.2008 which is available on this Ministry's website ***www.mib.nic.in*** under the heading 'Self Regulation Guidelines 2008'.

News Broadcasters Association in the aftermath of the 26/11 terrorist attacks has also formulated a self regulating code. The code highlights self regulation during armed conflict, internal disturbance, communal violence, public disorder, crime and other similar situations. The details of the guidelines are available on the website of News Broadcasters Association *(**www.nbanewdelhi.com**)*

Proposals for change of ownership, Directors etc. in case of TV channels

1104. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received proposals regarding the change of ownership/acquiring of stake and change of Directors of TV channels;

(b) if so, the complete details of requests/proposals received from TV channels during the last two years; and

(c) the policy with regard to change of equity pattern and appointment/replacement of Directors on the Board by TV channels?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The information is being collected.

(c) As per clause 5.8 of the uplinking guidelines, the companies are required to ensure their continued eligibility as applicable through out the period of permission and adhere to all the terms and conditions of the permission. As per clause 5.10, it is obligatory on the part of the companies to take prior permission from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting before effecting any change in the CEO/Board of Directors. In so far as news and current affairs TV channels are concerned, it is prescribed under clause 3.1.5. That it will be obligatory on the part of the company to intimate the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, the changes in Foreign Direct Investment in the company, within 15 days of such change. While effecting changes in the shareholding patterns, it shall ensure its continued compliance to Clause 3.1.1 and 3.1.2 of the guidelines. Further, clause 3.1.8 of the uplinking guidelines prescribes that at least 3/4th of the Directors on the Board of Directors of the company and all key Executives and Editorial staff shall be resident Indians and clause 3.1.9 lays down that the representation on the Board of Directors of the company shall as far as possible be proportionate to the shareholding.

The applicant company, irrespective of its ownership, equity structure or management control, would be eligible to seek permission for non-news and current affairs TV channels under the uplinking guidelines.

Whereas, the downlinking guidelines stipulate that the entity applying for permission for downlinking a channel, uplinked from abroad. (*i.e.* Applicant Company), must be a company registered in India under the Indian Companies Act, 1956, irrespective of its equity structure, foreign ownership or management control. As per clause 5.11 of the downlinking guidelines, the applicant company shall give intimation to Ministry of I and B regarding change in the directorship, key executives or foreign direct investment in the company, within 15 days of such a change taking place. It shall also obtain security clearance for such changes in its directors and key executives.

TV channel for healthcare

1105. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state: